

Changing Hearts Changing Lives

Third Quarter Sunday School
Trinity Presbyterian Church

Who are these guys?

- Paul David Tripp, David Powlison
 - Both pastors/counselors with decades of experience
 - Christian Counseling and Educational Foundation (CCEF); Philadelphia PA; web: ccef.org
 - Paul Tripp Ministries; web: paultripp.com

Proverbs 20:11

Proverbs 20:11 (NASB95)

¹¹ It is by his deeds that a lad distinguishes himself

If his conduct is pure and right.

CHCL Course Objectives

- Gain a biblical understanding of the dynamic of change in a person's life
- Gain practical insight on how to biblically change your own life and begin practicing it
- Gain practical insight on how to help others change and begin helping them
- Commit yourself anew to progressive sanctification in the here and now
- Improve ability to think, act and speak biblically

Course Takeaways

- What are the one or two changes I can make in my daily and weekly routine that will put in action what I have learned in this course?
- What are the one or two actions I can do to help someone close to me in their Christian walk?

"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them." (Ephesians 2:10, NKJV)

"For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren." (Romans 8:29, NKJV)

DQ Warm up

Your friend is struggling with a besetting (life dominating) sin and says to you: “I have prayed for God to take this desire from me and it has not gone away; therefore I conclude that (any of the below):

-God doesn't care

-God isn't really there

-The Bible doesn't really speak to my problems because I did what it says to do and it didn't work

-What I really need is the help of a therapist

How Can I Change?

- What is the person's motivation for change?
 - 1 Cor 10:31
 - 2 Cor 5:9
- HOW did you pray?
 - Based on Scripture or something else?
 - Personalize Psalms by writing out prayers
 - e.g. Psa 51; Psa 139
- After you prayed, what did you DO?
 - Radical amputation (Matt 18:7-9)
 - Practice put off and put on (Eph 4:22-24)
- Encourage them to see biblical change as a process
 - John Mark; Barnabas, Peter didn't always get it right
 - How are you doing as compared to last week, last month, six months ago?

Application

- Through out the course we will intersperse practical study and application of the Scripture
- Assignment one: read Eph 4:17-32 at least three times this week
 - Write down any questions you have about the text
 - Note and look up cross references
 - Make note of your personal areas of strength and weakness
 - Ask God to show you how He wants you to change

Eph 4:17-24

Ephesians 4:17-24 (NKJV)

¹⁷ This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the **futility of their mind**, ¹⁸ having their **understanding darkened**, being **alienated from the life of God**, because of the **ignorance that is in them**, because of the **blindness of their heart**; ¹⁹ who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. ²⁰ But you have not so learned Christ, ²¹ if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: ²² that you **put off**, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, ²³ and **be renewed in the spirit of your mind**, ²⁴ and that you **put on** the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.

Reflections on Eph 4:17-24

- Personal growth in Christ is fundamentally about a *change of mindset* (or heart)
 - Earthly wisdom vs. Godly wisdom (c.f. Proverbs)
 - Personal-focused desires vs. God-focused desires (c.f. James 4:3)

Discerning the Heart X-ray Questions

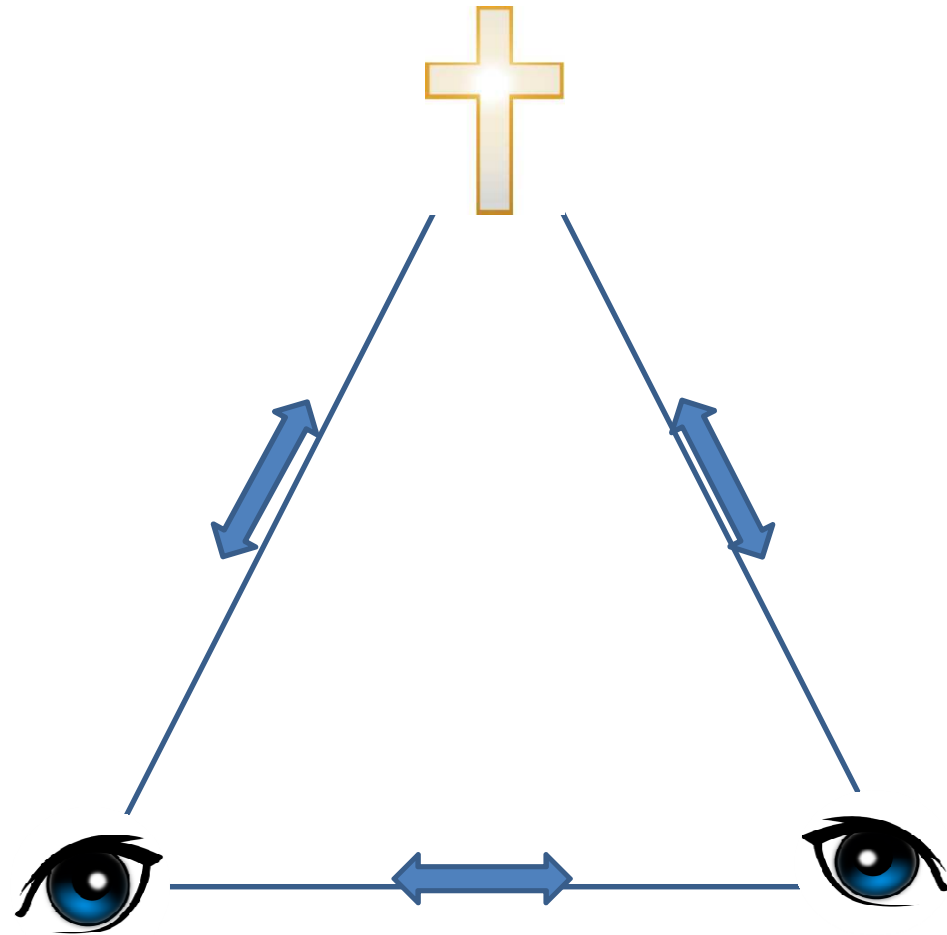
1. What do you love? Hate?
2. What do you want, desire, crave, lust, and wish for? What desires do you serve and obey?
3. What do you seek, aim for, and pursue?
4. Where do you bank your hopes?
5. What do you fear? What do you not want? What do you tend to worry about?
6. What do you feel like doing?
7. What do you think you need? What are your 'felt needs'?
8. What are your plans, agendas, strategies, and intentions designed to accomplish?
9. What makes you tick? What sun does your planet revolve around? What do you organize your life around?
10. Where do you find refuge, safety, comfort, escape, pleasure, security?
11. What or whom do you trust?

Discerning the Heart X-ray Questions

12. Whose performance matters? On whose shoulders does the well-being of your world rest?
Who can make it better, make it work, make it safe, make it successful?
- 13.** Whom must you please? Whose opinion of you counts? From whom do you desire approval and fear rejection? Whose value system do you measure yourself against? In whose eyes are you living? Whose love and approval do you need?
14. Who are your role models? What kind of person do you think you ought to be or want to be?
15. On your deathbed, what would sum up your life as worthwhile? What gives your life meaning?
16. How do you define and weigh success and failure, right or wrong, desirable or undesirable, in any particular situation?
17. What would make you feel rich, secure, prosperous? What must you get to make life sing?
- 18.** What would bring you the greatest pleasure, happiness, and delight? The greatest pain or misery?
19. Whose coming into political power would make everything better?
20. Whose victory or success would make your life happy? How do you define victory and success?
- 21.** What do you see as your rights? What do you feel entitled to?

The Marriage Relationship

- Do you view you spouse first as:
 - Sinning against you? Or...
 - Sinning against God?



Reflections on Eph 4:17-24

- A change of mindset always includes putting off the old outer man fruit and putting on the new man fruit (Eph 4:22-24)
 - This mirrors the basic Gospel pattern of having sins forgiven and righteousness credited (c.f. Rom 6)
 - The gives us a picture of the what the HOW of change looks like on the outside
 - The passage now transitions to more specifics of Christian life change

Eph 4:25-32

25 Therefore, putting away lying, “Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor,” for we are members of one another. 26 “Be angry, and do not sin”: do not let the sun go down on your wrath, 27 nor give place to the devil. 28 Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need. 29 Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. **30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.** 31 Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. 32 And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.

Eph 4:25-32

- Sins addressed include:
 - Dishonesty
 - Anger
 - Stealing
 - Destructive speech

Dynamics of Biblical Change

- All biblical change is Gospel based

Galatians 5:1 (NASB95)

¹ It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery.

- Objective righteousness matters

Romans 6:1-2 (NASB95)

¹ What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase? ² May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it?

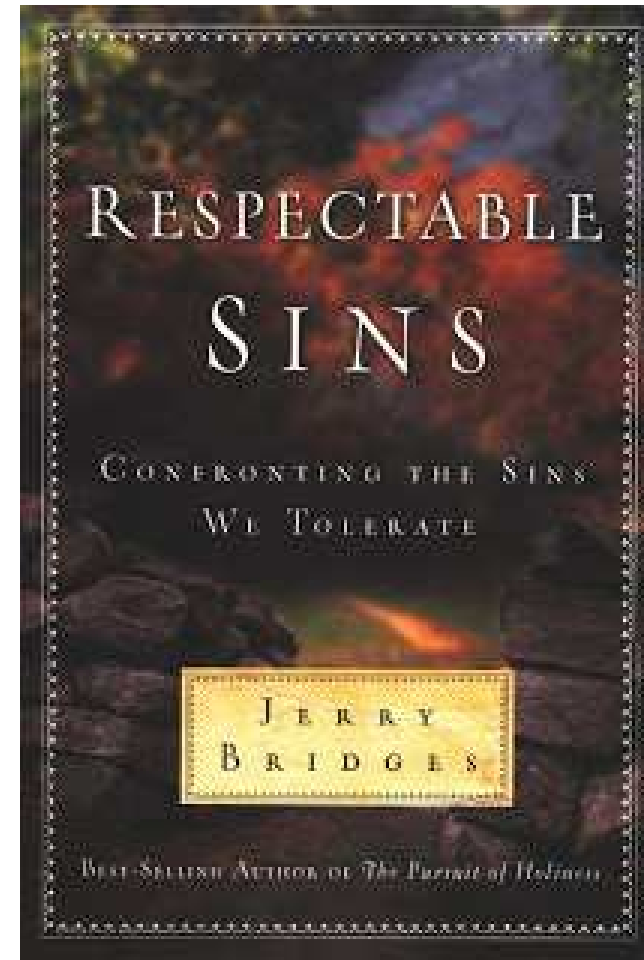
- Does not earn move us more favor (Gal 4:4-6)
- Manifestation of heart change
- Also helps with heart change (c.f. James 3:6)

Book Recommendation

- *Respectable Sins* by Jerry Bridges
 - Biblically confronts the common sins of relatively “righteous” Christians
 - Example: The sin of “ungodliness”

“Contrary to what we normally think, ungodliness and wickedness are not the same. A person may be a nice, respectable citizen and still be an ungodly person”

“Ungodliness may be defined as living one’s everyday life with little to no thought of God, or of God’s will, or of God’s glory, of one’s dependence on God.”



This week

- Begin memorization of Eph 4:29 and 4:31-32
- Prayerfully ask the Lord to convict you of any offensive ways in the areas of:
 - Dishonesty
 - Anger
 - Stealing
 - Destructive speech

Why Memorize Scripture?

- Because God tells us to!
- Psalm 1:1-3 (NASB95)

¹ How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, Nor stand in the path of sinners, Nor sit in the seat of scoffers! ² But his delight is in the law of the Lord, And in His law he meditates day and night. ³ He will be like a tree firmly planted by streams of water, Which yields its fruit in its season And its leaf does not wither; And in whatever he does, he prospers.
- Joshua 1:8 (NASB95)

⁸ “This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success.

Why Memorize Scripture?

- Because our cognition (thinking) is an active element of our hearts and Scripture is designed to confront and change our thoughts

2 Corinthians 10:5 (NASB95)

⁵ We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and **we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ,**

Hebrews 4:12 (NASB95)

¹² For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and **able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.**

Homework Review: Eph 4:29

Memorization

Ephesians 4:29 (NKJV)

²⁹ Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers.

Ephesians 4:29 (ESV)

²⁹ Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.

Ephesians 4:29 (NASB95)

²⁹ Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear.

Characteristics of Corrupt Speech

- Defined in part by the hearer
- Improperly motivated
- Not timely—Pro 27:14
 - Proverbs 27:14 (NASB95)
¹⁴ He who blesses his friend with a loud voice early in the morning,
It will be reckoned a curse to him.
- Not necessary
- Dishonest/inaccurate
 - Ephesians 4:15 (NASB95)
¹⁵ **but speaking the truth in love**, we are to grow up in all aspects
into Him who is the head, even Christ,
 - Proverbs 26:18 (NASB95)
¹⁸ Like a madman who throws Firebrands, arrows and death,
¹⁹ So is the man who deceives his neighbor, And says, “Was I not
joking?”
- Other examples:
 - Sarcasm
 - 100% language: “You always..., You never...”
 - Talking constantly without listening

Homework Review: Eph 4:29

Memorization

Ephesians 4:29 (NKJV)

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Homework Review: Eph 4:32

Memorization

Ephesians 4:31-32 (NASB95)

³¹ Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. ³² Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.

Edifying Speech Homework

" Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things." (Philippians 4:8, NKJV)

- The 7 to 1 communication rule
- Choose a person (or two or three) close to you
- Make a list of 10 attributes or characteristics for each that you are thankful for

Bob

integrity
kindness
provider
grateful
initiative
sensitive
wise
resourceful
punctual
disciplined
good listener
courteous

Johnny

honesty
diligent worker
leadership
neat
decisive
loyal
forgiving
frugal
enthusiastic
bold
content
thoughtful

Suzy

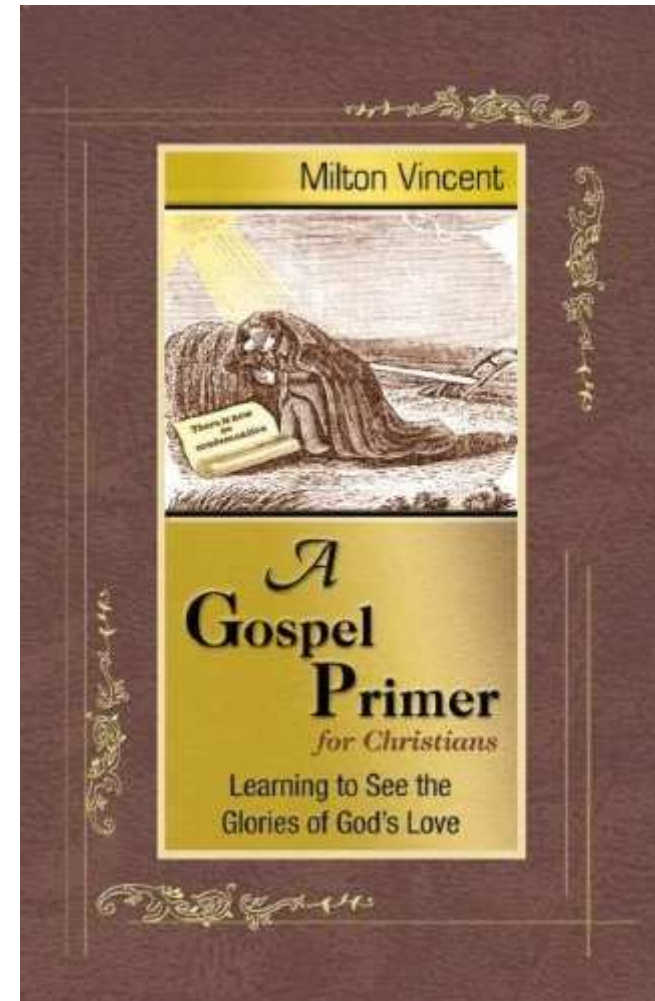
courage
full of faith
cautious
determined
responsible
dependable
persistent
sincere
tolerant
discerning
fair
well organized

- Endeavor to compliment that person once every day

Book Recommendation

- *A Gospel Primer* by Milton Vincent
 - A helpful daily reflection on the Gospel that can be read through in 1-2 months

“The gospel encourages me to rest in my righteous standing with God, a standing which Christ Himself has accomplished and always maintains for me. I never have to do a moment’s labor to gain or maintain my justified status before God! Freed from the burden of such a task, I now can put my energies into enjoying God, pursuing holiness, and ministering God’s amazing grace to others.”



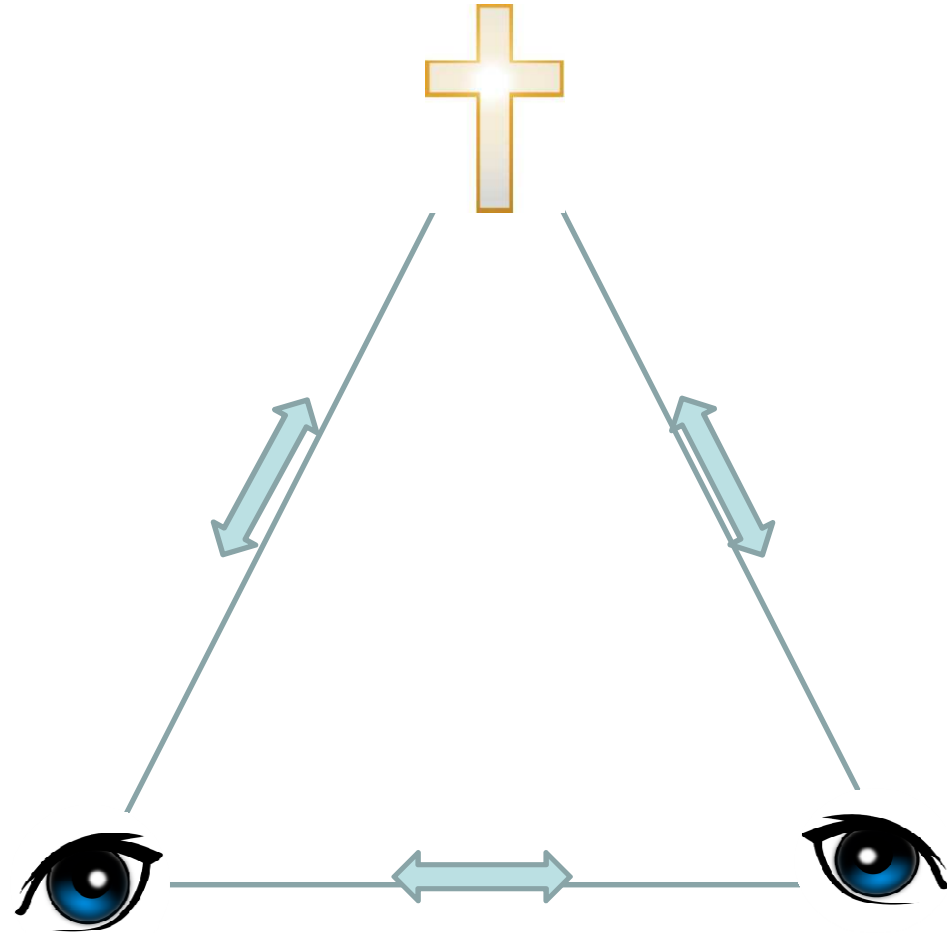
Case Study

This case involves a newly married couple that does not yet have children. The husband comes home from work at 6PM and finds consistently that his wife, a homemaker, has left the house in disarray and she has not yet started making dinner. Every time he tries to talk to her about it, she starts crying, and runs upstairs to their bedroom and slams the door.

What should the husband do?

The Marriage Relationship

- Do you view you spouse first as:
 - Sinning against you? Or...
 - Sinning against God?
- **Husband:**
 - How can I be God's instrument of mercy to my wife?



Biblical Principles to Consider

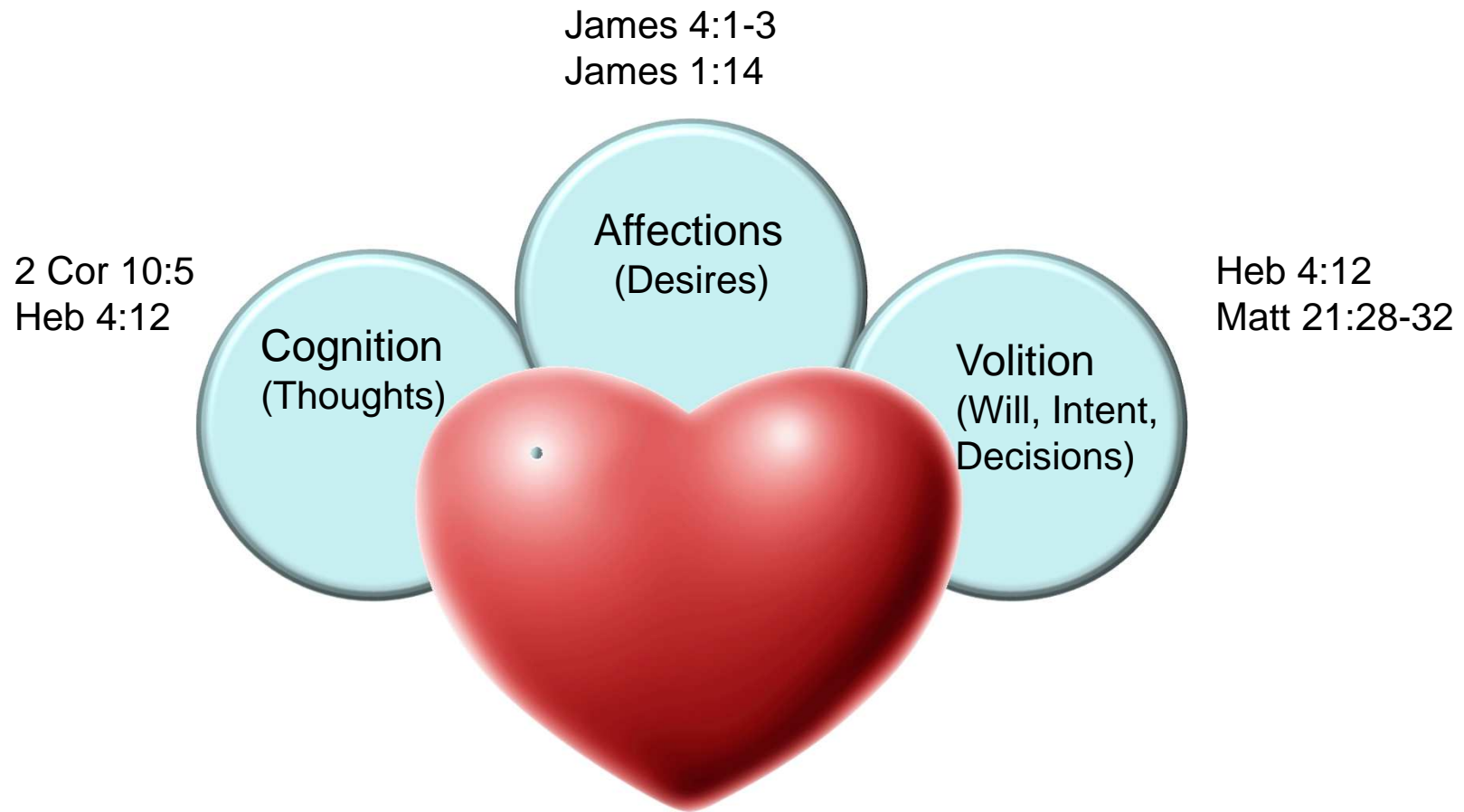
- For the counselor: ask questions!
 - Proverbs 20:5 (NASB95)
 - ⁵ A plan in the heart of a man is like deep water,
But a man of understanding draws it out.
 - Things like: How many times has this happened? Is there a particular current struggle the wife is having that is related? Does the wife have a relationship background that trained her to respond this way? Is the husband being pigheaded, demanding? What does he want and why? How has the couple tried to solve the problem and what was the result?

Biblical Principles to Consider

- For the husband:
 - Practice love
 - 1 Cor 13:5: “..love does not seek its own,”
 - What is your desired goal in dealing with this problem and why?
 - Love your wife selflessly
 - Ephesians 5:25ff
 - ²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her,
 - Be patient and understanding; seek to learn what is going on inside your wife’s heart
 - 1 Peter 3:7
 - ⁷ You husbands in the same way, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with someone weaker, since she is a woman; and show her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers will not be hindered.
 - Put off REACTIONARY responses/speech and put on Christ-like ACTION responses/speech
 - Ephesians 4:32 (NASB95)
 - ³² Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.
 - Ephesians 4:29
 - ²⁹ Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear.

Biblical Heart “Surgery”

Three Aspects of the Heart



Intentions: Matt 21:28-32

²⁸ “But what do you think? A man had two sons, and he came to the first and said, ‘Son, go work today in the vineyard.’ ²⁹ “And he answered, ‘I will not’; but afterward he regretted it and went. ³⁰ “The man came to the second and said the same thing; and he answered, ‘I will, sir’; but he did not go. ³¹ “Which of the two did the will of his father?” They said, “The first.” Jesus said to them, “Truly I say to you that the tax collectors and prostitutes will get into the kingdom of God before you. ³² “For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him; but the tax collectors and prostitutes did believe him; and you, seeing this, did not even feel remorse afterward so as to believe him.

DQ Question

A Christian friend states “I can forgive him for what he did to me, but I can never forget; and I don’t see how we can every restore our relationship.”

Biblically critique this statement.

How God Has Forgiven Us in Christ (Eph 4:32)

Psalm 103:8-14 (NASB95)

8 The Lord is compassionate and gracious,
Slow to anger and abounding in lovingkindness.

9 He will not always strive *with us*,
Nor will He keep *His anger forever*.

10 He has not dealt with us according to our sins,
Nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.

11 For as high as the heavens are above the earth,
So great is His lovingkindness toward those who fear Him.

12 As far as the east is from the west,
So far has He removed our transgressions from us.

13 Just as a father has compassion on *his children*,
So the Lord has compassion on those who fear Him.

14 For He Himself knows our frame;
He is mindful that we are *but dust*.

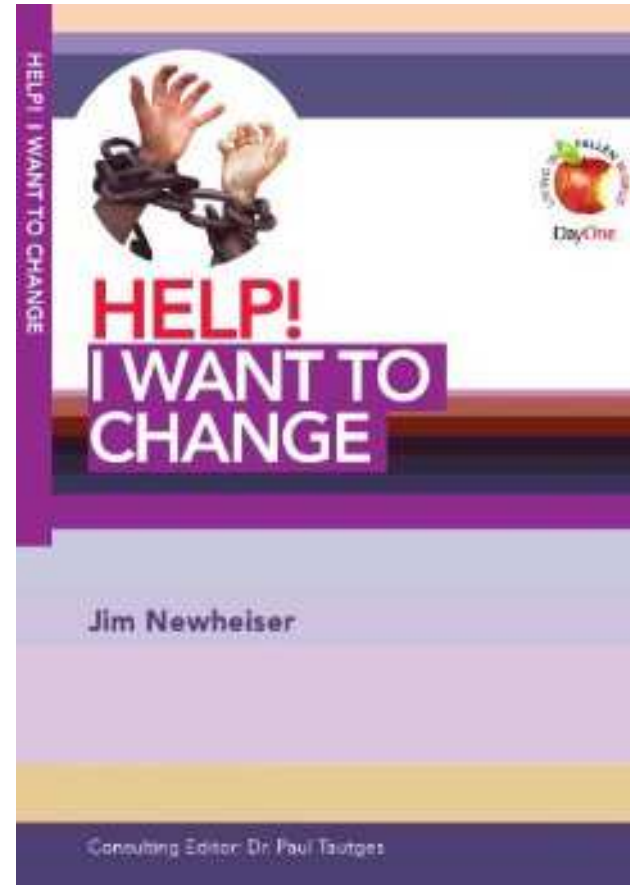
Four Elements of Biblical Forgiveness

1. A promise to not bring the matter up between you.
2. A promise to not dwell on the matter yourself.
3. A promise to not bring the matter up with others.
4. A promise to work towards restoring relationship.

Book Recommendation

Help! I Want to Change
by Jim Newheiser

- Emphasizes that lasting, biblical change is:
 - Dependent on the Gospel (Eph 2:8-10)
 - Normally occurs over an extended period of time
 - Requires our efforts, but our efforts remain dependent on God (Phil 2:13)



Case Study: John and Jenny

- John grew up in a Christian home but as a young adult was enslaved to drugs, sex and alcohol. Upon the tragic death of a close friend in a drunk driving accident, John began to reevaluate his life realizing his sin and need for the Savior. He professed salvation and although it was difficult - his life changed accordingly. He still struggled with his desires for the things he was addicted to inwardly, but he suppressed his desire as much as possible.
- Met Jenny in college, married and settled into a solid Bible believing church after graduation and had a family. John was made a deacon and served faithfully for many years. He was a well respected man at the church and evidenced devotion to Christ and his family.
- At the age of 45, John experienced a severe stroke. The doctors anticipated a full recovery for John, but Jenny immediately noticed a difference in him. Initially he was irritable and angry, but when she brought him home, he worsened. He would have fits of anger and start cursing and throwing things against the wall. Jenny was baffled, never having known him to be this way before the stroke. She tried to patiently love him, but none of her efforts to appease him helped. His boss called Jenny and informed her that he was causing trouble at work. He also warned that if he did not get his life under control, they would have to let him go.
- Jenny tried to find a time to talk to John about this but he would not go straight home from work, but would get in around midnight every night, smelling of alcohol. Jenny soon discovered pornography on their computer. At this point she was desperate for help. This was not the John she married or the John from before the stroke. She didn't understand how he could heal physically from the stroke, but turn into a completely different person. She convinces him to come to you for counsel.

Counseling Considerations

- Scripture teaches a *unified, yet dichotomous* (two-fold) nature of man
 - We are created to have a physical being and a spiritual being

Genesis 2:7

7 Then the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.

- While our two natures are distinct, they are unified and one impacts the other—unconfessed sin is an example

Psalms 32:3-4

3 When I kept silent about my sin, my body wasted away
Through my groaning all day long.

4 For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me;
My vitality was drained away as with the fever heat of summer. Selah.

- A counselor should be informed about the physical being, but focus his/her efforts on the spiritual being

Counseling Considerations (cont.)

- Areas to explore with John include:
 - Encourage him to get adequate medical care
 - Learn as much as you can about his pre stroke Christian walk; build a bridge to post stroke life
 - Self vs. Gospel dependent effort?
 - Issues or problems with thought/speech patterns?
 - Basis and motivation for repentance? (1 Cor 7:9-11)
 - Practically explore the heart issues that are now being manifested in his behavior; provide targeted Bible study and prayer to address
 - Enlist the body of Christ to come alongside John (and Jenny!) to help in prayer, accountability, and loving them

Temptation Journal

Outer Man:

1. What circumstances led me to my temptation? (What happened that tempted me?):
2. What did I say/do when I was tempted? How did I respond to the circumstances?:
3. What is the biblical evaluation of what I said/did when I was tempted? (How does the Bible classify what I said/did?):
4. What should I have said/did when I was tempted? How could I have responded biblically when I was tempted?:

Inner Man (heart):

1. What did I say to myself in my heart when I was tempted? (What did I want, desire, long for when I was tempted?):
2. What does the Bible say about what I said to myself when I was tempted? (What does the Bible say about what I wanted?):
3. What should I have said to myself when I was tempted? (What should I have wanted more than my own selfish and idolatrous desires?):

Counseling Considerations (cont.)

- Areas to explore with Jenny include:
 - Encourage her to view the situation through God's eyes versus her own

Romans 8:28-29 (NASB95)

28 And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.

29 For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren;

1 Corinthians 10:13 (NASB95)

13 No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it.

- She must be helped in her role as an instrument of God's mercy to John that is compassionate and sensitive towards John's brain injury, yet holds him accountable for his sin
- She may be tempted to idolize the "pre-stroke" John, and will need help to foster a heart of contentment and thankfulness for her current circumstances (Phil 4:8)

The Four Communication Rules of Ephesians 4

- Through study of Ephesians 4:25-32, we can glean four important rules for interpersonal communication for all relationships:
 - Be HONEST! (Eph 4:25)
 - Keep CURRENT! (Eph 4:26,27)
 - Attack the PROBLEM, not the PERSON! (Eph 4:29,30)
 - ACT! Don't REACT! (Eph 4:31-32)

1. Be HONEST! (Eph 4:25)

- Ephesians 4:25 (NASB95)
 - 25 Therefore, laying aside falsehood, speak truth each one of you with his neighbor, for we are members of one another.
- Speak!
 - Greek imperative: “you speak up!”
 - People cannot read your mind
 - Clamming up is out for the Christian.
- Speak truth!
 - Speaking the truth is a verb form that involves continuous action.
 - Present tense—you must be always doing it
 - Examples of the way you may be dishonest in your speech:
 - Outright dishonesty
 - Incongruencies: i.e. speech is incongruent with what you are thinking and communicating with non verbals (Mark 7:6)
 - Disguised communication: e.g., speaking with innuendo or implied accusations
 - Ulterior motives—saying something you don’t mean to get what you want
 - Honesty is more than not lying—it is being open and honest with the truth—it is an attitude of the heart!

1. Be HONEST! (Eph 4:25) (cont.)

- Speak the truth lovingly! (cf. Eph 4:15)
 - Sometimes people can be brutal with the truth
 - Christians are to speak the truth with the other person's best interests in mind (Eph 4:29)
- Colossians 4:6
 - 6 Let your speech always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person.
- Proverbs 10:20-21
 - 20 The tongue of the righteous is *as choice silver*,
The heart of the wicked is *worth little*.
 - 21 The lips of the righteous feed many,
But fools die for lack of understanding.

2. Keep CURRENT! (Eph 4:26, 27)

Ephesians 4:26-27

²⁶ Be angry, and yet do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, ²⁷ and do not give the devil an opportunity.

- **Festering is not allowed**
 - Note: “Frustrated,” “upset,” “irritated,” = ANGER
- **Failure to solve each day’s problems that day...or as soon as possible, means you are:**
 - Guilty of sin
 - Opening the way to resentment and bitterness
 - Distorting subsequent problems
 - Married couples: endangers your physical relationship—nobody wants to go to bed with their problem! (1 Cor 7:5)
- **Matthew 6:34: “Each day has enough trouble of its own.”**

3. Attack the PROBLEM, Not the PERSON! (Ephesians 4:29-30)

- What is included in corrupt speech?
 - Word usage in Greek includes description of rotten fish
 - Not really about vulgar language per se—the focus is on the effect it has on the hearer
 - Used broadly to describe anything that tears down character
- Some less than obvious examples:
 - “You always” or “you never”—as if you are trying to make them out to be the worst sinner in the world
 - Sarcasm, innuendo

3. Attack the PROBLEM, Not the PERSON! (Ephesians 4:29-30) (cont.)

- Edifying words:
 - Build up
 - Focus on the problem
 - Are solution oriented
 - Full of graciousness
 - Seek to build the listener up
- Note: you can have an edifying disagreement
- You should speak edifying words even if you don't feel like it, but **not** if you don't mean it (emotion versus volition)—note that Matt 5:44 is an imperative, not based on feeling

Matthew 5:44 (NASB95)

⁴⁴ “But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,

4. Act! Don't React! (Ephesians 4:31-32)

- Reactions to problems (v. 31):
 - **Bitterness**—resulting in perpetual animosity
 - **Wrath**—passionate outburst
 - **Anger**—subtle, deep flowing anger
 - **Clamor**—outcry and shouting
 - **Slander**—speaking evil of a person
 - **Malice**—general wishing of ill will towards others
- Actions (v. 32):
 - Kind—useful, worthy, good, benevolent
 - Tender hearted—compassionate towards partner
 - Forgiving—exercising grace

Instruments in the Hands of the Redeemer

- **Love:** Build relationships in which the work of God can thrive
- **Know:** Really knowing people, versus terminally casual relationships
- **Speak:** Helping people see themselves in the mirror of God's Word
- **Do:** Staying on-site to help people apply change in the harsh realities of everyday life

Love: Build relationships in which the work of God can thrive

- Enter the person's world
 - Look for “Entry Gates”: A person's *experience* of the problem
- Incarnate the Love of Christ (Gal 5:22-23; Col 3:12-15)
- Identify with the person's suffering (Heb 12:10,11)
- Accept the person with agenda

Summary

The Big Picture Points

- We are called...*commanded* to grow up in Christ
 - Progressive sanctification is integral to our salvation

Philippians 2:12-13 (NASB95)

¹² So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling; ¹³ for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for *His good pleasure*.

- Our growth in Christ is objective and specific, rather than subjective and abstract

James 1:25 (NASB95)

²⁵ But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the *law of liberty*, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, *this man will be blessed in what he does*.

Summary

The Big Picture Points (cont.)

- We are called to engage in a relational ministry of the Word to help others grow in Christ

Colossians 3:16 (NASB95)

¹⁶ Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

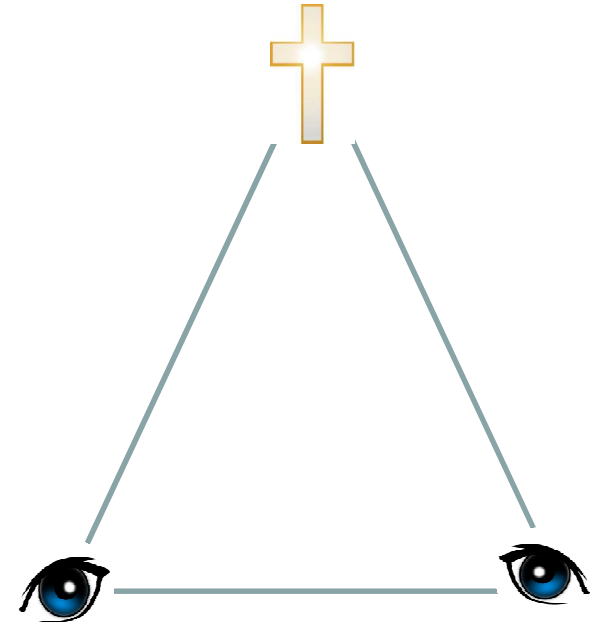
Galatians 6:1-2 (NASB95)

¹ Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; *each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted.* ² *Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ.*

Summary

The Big Picture Points (cont.)

- When sinned against, strive to focus on the Kingdom perspective and loving the offender, rather than the wrong against you (1 Cor 13:5)
 - ASK: How can I help this person in their relationship with God?
- Forgiveness involves 4 promises (Eph 4:32; Psa 103:8-14)
 1. A promise to not bring the matter up between you.
 2. A promise to not dwell on the matter yourself.
 3. A promise to not bring the matter up with others.
 4. A promise to work towards restoring relationship (Matt 18:15).



Summary

The Big Picture Points (cont.)

- Personal growth in Christ is fundamentally about a change in the *heart*

Ephesians 4:22-24 (NASB95)

²² that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, ²³ ***and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind,*** ²⁴ and put on the new self, which in *the* likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.

- This change is only possible because of the Gospel
 - We are wholly dependent on Christ's finished work and the Holy Spirit to change us
 - Yet we are active participants in this process (Phil 2:12-13). We exercise our responsibilities through the means of grace:
 - Bible meditation, faith, prayer, fellowship and accountability with the saints; forgiveness, worship

Summary

The Big Picture Points (cont.)

- Through study of Ephesians 4:25-32, we can glean four important rules for interpersonal communication for all relationships:
 - Be HONEST! (Eph 4:25)
 - Keep CURRENT! (Eph 4:26,27)
 - Attack the PROBLEM, not the PERSON! (Eph 4:29,30)
 - ACT! Don't REACT! (Eph 4:31-32)

Summary

The Big Picture Points (cont.)

- Our video series encouraged intentionality in our relationships for the purpose of helping others to grow in Christ
- CCEF offers these four points as a helpful framework (we can study these more in future classes)
 - **Love:** Build relationships in which the work of God can thrive
 - **Know:** Really knowing people, versus terminally casual relationships
 - **Speak:** Helping people see themselves in the mirror of God's Word
 - **Do:** Staying on-site to help people apply change in the harsh realities of everyday life